9-25-2012

Fostering Scholarship Capacity: The Experience of Nurse Educators

Penelope A. Cash
University of British Columbia Okanagan, penny.cash@ubc.ca

Betty Tate
North Island College, betty.tate@nic.bc.ca

Fostering Scholarship Capacity: The Experience of Nurse Educators

Abstract

In a milieu where traditional views of scholarship are embedded in the culture of educational institutions, and nursing programs in particular, this paper reports on a research project designed to support nurse educators' capacity to engage in scholarly activities. Rogers' (2003, 2004) "Diffusion of Innovation" model provided a theoretical vantage point from which to consider the ways scholarly inquiry in and across the nursing programs could be promoted. The project was evaluated between 2004 and 2007 using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In this paper we highlight some of the meanings emerging from the qualitative information collected because this data best illustrates Rogers' (2003) model. Although significant progress was made towards building scholarship capacity with nursing faculty there remains ongoing work to be undertaken. Continuing to support a broader view of scholarship and intentional scholarship capacity building, particularly the scholarship of teaching and learning is becoming increasingly difficult given existing cultural and structural contradictions such as traditional ideologies associated with research; the competitiveness associated with the valuing of individual research; lack of infrastructure supports; and time for research in contexts where there are decreasing numbers of faculty. The authors think it is important to pay attention to this feedback as advances in scholarship of teaching and learning may be at risk.

Le présent article traite d'un projet de recherche visant à soutenir la capacité des enseignants en sciences infirmières à entreprendre des activités scientifiques dans un milieu où la vision traditionnelle de l'avancement des connaissances en enseignement et en apprentissage est enchâssée dans la culture des institutions d'enseignement, et en particulier, dans les programmes de sciences infirmières. Le modèle de « diffusion de l'innovation » de Rogers (2003, 2004) a fourni un point de vue théorique à partir duquel il est possible de réfléchir à la façon de promouvoir la recherche en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur dans les programmes de sciences infirmières. Le projet a fait l'objet d'une évaluation qualitative et quantitative entre 2004 et 2007. Dans cet article, nous soulignons certaines interprétations qui émergent des données qualitatives recueillies parce qu'elles illustrent le mieux le modèle de Rogers (2003). Même si d'importants progrès ont été effectués en matière de renforcement des capacités relatives à l'avancement des connaissances en pédagogie chez les enseignants en sciences infirmières, il reste encore du travail à faire. Il est de plus en plus difficile de continuer à appuyer une vision plus large de l'avancement des connaissances et du renforcement intentionnel des capacités en la matière, surtout de l'avancement des connaissances en enseignement et en apprentissage, étant donné les contradictions culturelles et structurelles existantes. À titre d'exemples, mentionnons les idéologies traditionnelles associées à la recherche, la compétitivité liée à l'évaluation de la recherche individuelle. l'absence de soutien à l'infrastructure et le temps consacré à la recherche dans les milieux où le nombre d'enseignants est en baisse. Les auteurs pensent qu'il est important de tenir compte de cette rétroaction puisque les progrès en matière d'avancement des connaissances en enseignement et en apprentissage pourraient être menacés.

Keywords

qualitative research, scholarship, building capacity, nurse education, teaching and learning, diffusion of innovation

Cover Page Footnote

NESPAC Members: Kerry Lynn Durnford, and Suzanne Wade, Aurora College; Virginia Birnie and Patty Foster, Camosun College; Joan Bray and Norma Sherret, College of the Rockies; Pam Burry, Douglas College;

The importance of scholarship to nursing education lies at the heart of informing practice, facilitating change, and making a difference to the health and well-being of humanity (Meleis, 2012) by working with the interrelationships among theory, philosophy, practice, and research. It is therefore critical that nurse educators remain engaged in, and at the forefront of, nursing scholarship. Since the early 1990s when Boyer (1990) introduced a re-conceptualization of traditional research paradigms, many in nursing academia in Canada have used Boyer's reconsiderations to inform scholarship. Expanding the view of scholarship beyond exclusively research to a wider and more inclusive approach, Boyer (1990) proposed a major shift that takes into account discovery, application, integration, and teaching. Adopting Boyer's model, the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN, 2004) developed a position statement on scholarship which strengthened the importance of scholarship to educating nurses. In the development of the statement, CASN (2004) added service which valued the inquiry and community engagement of many nurse educators as a legitmate form of scholarship (see the Appendix). It was a position broad enough to recognise nursing's contributions to health research and to open up opportunities for nurse educators to explore areas of scholarship related to teaching and learning.

In British Columbia a partnership of 10 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs were first accredited by CASN in 2000. Feedback from CASN at that time included a recommendation to increase scholarship capacity among the faculty in the 10 nursing programs. The partnership took this feedback seriously and began a process to support faculty to increase their scholarship based on Boyer's (1990) model (Budgen & Gamroth, 2003; Storch & Gamroth, 2002). In 2004, the partnership embarked on a three year community development project designed to build scholarship capacity among nurse educators. How to engage faculty in developing their scholarship was a critical question the project team faced from the outset. Looking to a community development approach provided part of the answer but, perhaps, an equally important challenge was the complexity of the multiple cultural terrains within the nursing programs. Rogers' (2003, 2004) "Diffusion of Innovation" model provides a theoretical vantage point from which to consider the ways scholarly inquiry in and across the nursing programs could be promoted. Diffusion is defined by Rogers as the process by "which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (2003, p. 5). The four elements of this model are: (a) the innovation itself, (b) the channels or pathways used to communicate the innovation, (c) the time it takes to diffuse the innovation, and (d) the social system to be affected. The diffusion model is a micro-

process of social change that Rogers (2003) maintains depends upon the presence of the following five characteristics of the innovation:

1. Relative advantage, when individuals feel or consider the innovation to be an improvement on what has happened in the past;
2. compatability with the values and beliefs of the group;
3. complexity of the innovation and how difficult it could be to adopt and implement;
4. trialibility, whether the innovation can be implemented on a trial basis and evaluated before its introduction; and
5. observability of the innovation by people in other settings will influence the innovation's adoption or uptake by those who can see results.

(Rogers, 2003, pp. 229-266)

Using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation model as the theoretical underpinning, advocating for and engaging in scholarly inquiry as newly defined by Boyer (1990) and adopted by CASN in 2004, was an innovation that became diffused (Rogers, 2003) through the social systems of the project-partner schools.

This paper addresses the ways the scholarship development project, as an innovation, has supported nurse educators to broaden their view of scholarship, recognise themselves as scholars, become part of a community of scholars and appreciate scholarship as an everyday practice. We argue that continuing to enhance a broader view of scholarship and intentional scholarship capacity building, particularly the scholarship of teaching and learning, is critical given the present political, social and economic environments in which nurse education is currently situated.

The Project: Enhancing Scholarship Capacity

Nurse educators across 12 sites (two new partner sites joined after 2000 when the original Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing [CASN] accreditation feedback was received) in British Columbia and the Northwest Territories were engaged in the project to broaden their view and practice of scholarship (Cash & Tate, 2008). The aims of the project were to:

1) illuminate the meaning of scholarship of discovery, teaching, application, integration and service;
2) assist faculty to conceptualize their work as scholarly;
3) begin to collaborate with others on/in their scholarly activities;
4) increase individual, group and community capacity of faculty to engage in scholarly activity; and
5) increase capacity for scholarship at individual partner sites.

All of the participating faculty were teaching in a four year program leading to a BSN and shared values related to enhancing scholarship and learning about Boyer's model. This common understanding reflected what Rogers (2003) calls *compatability*. Contributing to the *relative advantage* of the project was an institutional desire to enhance

scholarship in order to maintain CASN accreditation. Because participating sites included community colleges, teaching focused universities and research intensive universities, faculty were developing scholarship within differing institutional parameters. In addition, faculty had varied and diverse research/scholarship/teaching interests which had been shaped by their particular assumptions including those that reflected different ideological, philosophical and pedagogical questions. Each of these factors were implicated in the *complexity* characteristic of the innovation.

At the outset of the project, a number of channels for communicating the innovation which are consistent with using a diffusion model were developed. A scholarship facilitator was appointed to support activity on and between sites, and helped to build connections within and between those sites. In so doing, personal and institutional communication channels (Rogers, 2002) were some of the ways in which perceptions were changed, with faculty realizing the *relative advantage* and wanting to get involved. In addition, the facilitator helped to unravel the complexity of Boyer's (1990) model so that faculty could articulate their individual and collective ideas to further scholarship. Site visits, on-site workshops, teleconferences, individual conversations and group support were all part of the communication channels adopted. Initially workshops were developed to see what momentum might be initiated though sharing ideas and conversations about what scholarship is, and what it is not. Early adoption of the ideas about scholarship coupled with the *observability* (Rogers, 2003) of what was happening at other sites, prompted faculty engagement in the project. As well, a yearly colloquium was held where faculty interested in forming a team could get together and find a common place to start. These teams have taken part in various interactions since the project began and continue to explore some significant areas in nursing education/research including pedagogical questions, practice models and practice environments. Faculty seeing the *relative advantage* (Rogers, 2002) of working with others on a topic they felt strongly about, and then *trial* (Rogers, 2002) scholarly inquiry, has served as a powerful affirmation to scholarship development. This confirmed the advantage (*observability and relative advantage*) of developing research teams that can inform practice. As groups developed, they engaged with their colleagues in scholarly activities.

Ethics Review and Data Collection

The project, including the channels to support diffusion of innovation, communications, and scholarship outcomes, were evaluated between 2004 and 2007. Prior to the commencement of the evaluation of the project, institutional ethics approvals were received from all particpating sites. As the project progresssed, all workshops, site visits, teleconferences, and yearly colloquium were evaluated using surveys, open-ended questionnaires and interviews. At the end of each year, faculty from participating sites were invited to respond to questionnaires while others were interviewed. To support confidentiality, each site representative on the organising committee interviewed two or three colleagues at a different site. A total of 63 nurses educators were interviewed between 2005 – 2007. Interviews varied in length from 45-100 minutes. All interviews were audiotaped, notes were taken, and all data were coded. In addition to the qualitative data reported on in this paper, quantitative data related to numbers of participants and

numbers of activities was also collected and these figures are reported in Table 1 to provide contextual background for the study.

Results

Quantitative or outcome data was collected in 2006 and 2007. The variety and number of activities undertaken in years two and three of the project, as well as the number of participants involved in each activity are identified in Table 1. Some participants may have engaged in more than one activity and may have taken part in the same activity more than once. Table 1 reflects the number of participants per activity, not the total number of times a participant may have engaged in the same activity.

Voices of the Participants

Although both quantitative and qualitative evaluation data were collected throughout the duration of the three-year project, we have chosen to highlight some of the meanings emerging from the qualitative information gained during 20 interviews, five workshop sessions, and one colloquium attended by 35 people because this data best illustrates Rogers (2003) Diffusion of Innovation model. The qualitative data from each year of the project were catalogued by year (year 1, 2, 3, etc.). Individual interviewees were randomly assigned a letter from the alphabet (A, B, C, etc.). A numerical code (1, 2, 3, etc.) was given to groups of aggregated information from workshop and colloquium data. Quotations in the section below are therefore documented by their codes followed by a page number. An example in the case of individual interviews is A:5, or in the data derived from workshop questionnaires and the colloquium evaluations is 1:8.

The qualitative data were analysed using a feminist post-structural approach in which multiple readings by two researchers illuminated consistent linguistic texts that depicted specific and nuanced common meanings or understandings that together reflected the participants' realities (Cheek, 2000). The project advisory committee members reviewed the analysis. They found the ideas resonated, adding their own personal meanings to the texts, reinscribing them based upon their social and ideological situatedness (Hammersley, 1992; Lather, 1991, 2007).

Grouping the textual data into different forms of meaning provided the basis for analysis (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Data was categorized into the following themes: (a) the increased visibility of scholarship at sites, (b) increased recognition of self as scholar, (c) recognition of scholarship as part of everyday practice and the importance of networking, and (d) collegial relationships to scholarship. The themes identified in the voices of participants are linked to the specific aims of the project.

Table 1
Activities and Participation in the Project

Activity	2006 Number Held	2006 Participant Numbers	2007 Number held	2007 Participant Numbers
Site Workshops	9	99	4	44
Individual Meetings	47	47	53	53
Writing Workshops	5	24	6	24
Developing Scholarly Communities Workshop Teleconference	2	22	2	22
Ethics Workshop Teleconference	6	10	1	10
Research Methodology Workshop	1	7	1	7
NESP Colloquia	1	33	1	35
Cross-site Research Team Teleconferences				
Cultural Safety	10	12	14	12
Collaborative Learning Units	6	13	11	8
Quality Practice Environments	19	8	18	7
Simulated Learning	5	18	1	24
International Practice	1	8	3	15
Health & Older Adults			Research Team Commenced 2007: 3	6
Institutional Ethnography			Research Team Commenced 2007: 5	19
Masculinities in Nursing			Research Team Commenced 2007	5
Individual Support				
PhD	7	7	8	8
Masters	11	11	14	14
Short Courses with Practice Focus	4	4	0	0
Research	50	50	63	63
Grants	11	11	20	20
Publications	15	15	62	62
NESPAC Meetings	8	13	9	15

Note: From "Year 3, final report: Developing scholarship / research capacity with nurse educators", B. Tate & P.A. Cash, 2008, 5.

Visibility of Scholarship

The first aim of the project, reflected within the visibility of scholarship, is to illuminate the meaning of scholarship of discovery, teaching, application, integration and service.

The project team worked at increasing the visibility of Boyer's (1990) vision of scholarship through workshops, individual meetings and connecting faculty with like interests across many sites. "Raising awareness of scholarly activities and shared interests" (A:4) has been critical to shaping the visibility of scholarly activity across partner sites. Reflecting on the impact of the project, one interviewee claimed "the project has served to keep the notion of scholarship in everyone's consciousness – what does it mean – how does it look" (N:1).

For a number of the faculty members, the notion of Boyer's (1990) model of scholarship was not necessarily new, given that they had been aware of ideas through the CASN (2004) position statement, but they had not necessarily engaged with it before. In the first year of the project, workshops with the Scholarship Facilitator and discussions amongst faculty helped to demystify the ideas contained in the meanings of scholarship of discovery, teaching, application, integration and service, encouraging faculty to begin to use the ideas in the context of their passion in nursing. Both the content and pedagogical processes that were used during the workshops focused attention on the appeal of working together, helping to emphasize the *relative advantage* and *compatibility* (Rogers, 2003) of using Boyer's model (1990) to explicate the importance of scholarship in nursing.

It is perhaps the increased awareness of the importance of nursing scholarship that facilitated a change in attitude towards faculty seeking opportunities to engage in scholarly work. Seeing colleagues involved in scholarly activity initiated by the project assisted other faculty by providing direction and opportunity (*observability* and *trialability*). Such a change in attitude resulted in greater participation in scholarship activities, wherever these activities were sponsored within the existing social system at the school/department/program or institution level. One interviewee noted that "new faculty had become interested and their excitement had generated energy across the institution" (H:1). Clearly, "some individuals felt they were missing out asking why they couldn't be part of a group producing scholarly activity" (H:1). Nevertheless, several faculty interviewed commented that "scholarly work [was] off the side of the desk" (H:2) which represented a major challenge for them to engage in and complete scholarly projects. This experience was also echoed in some of the workshops. One of the ways to address this difficulty was for faculty to use their professional development time as an opportunity to pursue scholarly interests (H:3).

The project also enabled faculty to see that their teaching could be scholarly. This recognition had a significant impact on valuing the work currently being undertaken by colleagues. "It helps to think of their teaching work as scholarship – know that it is important to highlight the scholarly work we are doing" (O:2). It "validated some of the things I already do, and [now I am] looking at ways to explore others" (3:1). These ideas are powerful indicators of how faculty are reshaping their work to incorporate a sense of scholarliness while trying to make it visible.

The importance of the visibility of inquiry in teaching practice and clinical practice were seen as critical to the undergraduate nursing program.

> We want what we learn to inform classroom teaching and the clinical setting – we are wondering if there is an opportunity to work more closely with [the health authority]. And we want to explore replicating a study that has been completed at [another hospital in another province] (G:1).

Faculty members also commented on the ways in which the culture of the school/department/program had been affected by the innovation. One participant mentioned that the project had assisted in establishing a culture of scholarship, in particular by helping faculty "…to view all our work as possible scholarly projects" (F:5). "It has offered the opportunity to access literature and keep up to date with standards of practice." These two dimensions have "enhanced accountability" suggested one nurse educator (F:3).

> Clearly there is a greater level of appreciation of activity and a keenness to become involved. It has given more awareness of [scholarship] to faculty as a whole. There has been definite attention to pursue [scholarly activity] through workshops, sharing of projects and research (J:2).

Reportedly, "it has brought faculty together in a way that has promoted a scholarly community" (H:5), a community that has acted to increase awareness of nursing scholarship through mentoring, creation of disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects where "seasoned faculty are involved and now seem to be more rewarded and interested" (H:3).

Recognition of Self as Scholar

Reflected within recognition of self as scholar is the second aim of the project: Assisting faculty to conceptualize their work as scholarly. The project assisted faculty in a variety of ways, for example, by helping individuals transition from their BSN to encouraging them to participate in a Master's or clinically oriented courses/program of study, doctoral programs, and/or building confidence while fostering life-long learning (F:4-5; O:2). For a number of participants their engagement had contributed to their identity as an academic, which gave them a new sense of confidence (McNamarra, 2009). Several faculty claimed that they had noticed that they or their colleagues had gained "[i]ncreased confidence, belief [in self with] the encouragement" (A:2) developed through the project. "It's given me confidence to get on and do things" (L:2). "[It has] got me back on track regarding the importance of research. The project has made me think about scholarship more" (K:1). "It has allowed me to be a role model for other projects" (L:2) and "it has given new language for my way of being – I didn't do a masters in this stuff – now I have the language" (O:1).

Comments about personal growth were evident as well: "It is helping me be the best teacher I can be and scholar" (O:2). The emancipatory intent of the capacity building approach seems to be critical to enhancing what McNamarra (2009) describes as

bolstering the intellectual capital in discursive and cultural texts, so that scholarship remains embodied in the development of the identities of nurse educator colleagues. The project contributed to the growing culture of inquiry by enhancing the interests of those not currently studying or engaging in scholarly projects (K:1). "I do think that those of us that have been bitten by the scholarship bug – once you find out how interesting it is you find the time" (B:2). In these respects there was a developing recognition of one's identity as a scholar, adding to a sense of empowerment (Madsen, McAllister, Godden, Greenhill, & Reid, 2009) in their everday practice.

Scholarship as Part of Everyday Practice

Reflected within scholarship as part of everyday practice is the fifth aim of the project: To increase capacity for scholarship at individual partner sites. In the first year of the project many nurse educators talked about the necessity of allocating specific time for scholarly activities. By the second year there was a remarkable shift in this perception. Many of those interviewed commented that scholarship was part of their everyday worlds. The everydayness is epitomised by this comment: "Scholarship is part of what we do, [it's] not an extra activity" (A:2). Nevertheless, the change has made an impact on teaching, such that "[it has encouraged me to be] looking more at creative and innovative ways to teach – thought provoking – reflection on [my] own practice" (I:1). These comments suggest that there is an element of renewal where faculty are seeking ways to nourish their practice, creating new opportunities for students. Acknowledged by faculty, "[the] pay off for students is big – take what you learn and bring it to the classroom" (F:3). The "integration of new practice ideas and theory into course development" (A:1) was seen to enrich the students' experience especially with faculty enacting the nature and processes of the work they were/are promoting.

> I think we are modeling inquiry more with students now. The possibilities within their scope of work and more modeling with students who go out and support their own research projects [is valuable learning as] students end up networking with faculty. (B:2)

The situation worked as a mutually informing process beneficial to faculty and students alike (Hawranik & Thorpe, 2008) adding to the possibilities in pedagogical innovation.

Scholarship as part of everyday practice supported the recognition of service (CASN, 2004). It helped to value what has traditionally been important to the partner sites in terms of nurse educators' contributions to their communities.

> I do appreciate the expanded view of scholarship that Boyer introduced. I like the incorporation of service into the definition of scholarship because nurses contribute so much to their communities through service. When one serves the community, it is through the nurse's knowledge base that makes such a difference to what is contributed. (G:2)

Often educational institutions undervalue working with community to support local health initiatives. Duke and Moss (2009) comment that scholarship needs to be contextual,

driven by conversations where there is "some tempering of the discursive dominance of the scholarship of discovery...otherwise the other forms of scholarship are likely to be overshadowed" (p. 39).

Several faculty acknowledged the many challenges before them in promoting scholarly inquiry. Concerns about "feeding into patriarchy" by following the traditional ideologies associated with research, "doing more with less", "working off the side of your desk", and "not a lot of time for scholarship" were sentiments expressed through several interviews (N:1; O:1; J:2; H:2). One interviewee suggested that present perceptions of scholarship got in the way of the everyday work of faculty. As a result, there was an appeal to recognise nurse educators' everyday teaching as scholarly (N:1). These comments reflect the ongoing fear about scholarship as research at some level within the nurse educator community(ies).

Creating a Community of Scholars

Situated within creating a community of scholars are the third and fourth aims of the project: To begin to collaborate with others on/in their scholarly activities and to increase individual, group and community capacity of faculty to engage in scholarly activity.

There were many comments that reveal the ways in which the innovation enhanced capacity, encouraged the development of networks and showed the importance of team work. Some of the previous comments made when participants were describing their personal development and scholarly teaching activities, prompted us to question whether the project was actually promoting the scholarship of teaching in addition to scholarly teaching. However, when participants talked about connecting with others across sites, having their work peer-reviewed and disseminating information, we began to see how the participants were moving from scholarly teaching where the focus has a tendency to be on content, processes, and outcomes of educational engagement, to the scholarship of teaching motivated by interests in inquiry, critical reflection and sharing of information in more public forums (Allen & Field, 2005). One interviewee said that "this has allowed me to collaborate with other individuals with the same interests – it has fostered opportunity to those who want to meet others – collaborate with the scholarship project as it allows you to network and move forward with [the] process" (C:2); and, "overall the project has helped to build communities of scholars working in areas of common interest and sharing knowledge" (C:2). These experiences may have disrupted the ongoing competition between educational institutions who, for the most part, are competing against one another for students, funding and scholars (Walker, 2009). The openness to collaboration has created new forms of dialogue with colleagues, conversations critical to enhancing opportunities for the develpment of alternative ideas, a sign that bodes well for the future. Part of the experience has been to generate an environment where faculty can share thoughts and understandings and feel comfortable in doing so. "This has meant working on the school culture to promote a safe space where ideas can be shared" (F:5), "an environment where one can feel supported as part of the research culture" (M:1) were all very common sentiments.

Networks have been fostered in and between sites, especially around cross-site projects. Groups developing lines of inquiry are now active and at various stages in the

research process. Comments about these relationships include the following: "This has been one of the most positive things that has happened, a group [has] formed and we are interested in and support each other's work" (P:2). "During the Colloquium relationships were enhanced by being together in a face-to-face conversation. It built connections and assisted faculty in making real progress in the scholarly work, future publications and collaborative activity" (8:1). The importance of connections and collegial relationships cannot be overstated.

> [It] raised awareness, [there is] comfort in knowing you are not alone in the barriers and challenges, understanding of scholarship; teleconferences have increased connectedness with others in the province; sharing was important [and] the support from the facilitator was awesome. [It] felt good to celebrate success [it] fostered collegiality among schools – and brought faculty together. (I:2)

Common practice in the academic environment sees faculty engage in their scholarly activity without colleagues' knowledge of their particular focus and projects. This began to change within partner sites as the project progressed with faculty sharing the research experience and wanting to participate in projects that were locally based but had cross-site affiliation. "We came together with a common interest and they invited us to participate in their work" (J:1). As a result the cross-site involvement has enriched the organisations adding to their research capacity. The Colloquium in particular supported the spirit of inquiry: "hearing what other schools are doing and where they are in their scholarship. Knowing there is support as we embark on our project" (8:2) confirmed the importance of "sharing of other's expertise/knowledge and experience with scholarly work" (8:2) in a way that "respected and recognised each others' strengths" (8:2) and encouraged participation.

The project also enabled "personal reflection and peer reflection with partners across programs" (7:5). Opportunities for discussion and reflection helped to change nurse educators' perceptions of scholarship as part of nurse educators' everyday agency (L:2; J:1; C:2). In some instances, working together was overshadowed by institutional demands to identify scholarship outcomes designed to demonstrate a single institutional endeavour, a position that encourages competition and substantiates productivity (Richter & Buttery, 2004). However, as time progressed participants increasingly commented that the most profound work being done was cross site activities, developed by and with individuals whose broader vision of scholarship was driven by passion. This shift also raised the visibility of scholarship and awareness of the importance of process – the engagement that participants experienced (Duke & Moss, 2009; McNamara, 2009; Thoun, 2009), it was not just about research "it's sharing expertise and mentoring new faculty and students" (D:1).

> You do a lot that you don't connect to the word scholarship. In the past they [nurse researchers] may have looked at discovery only – Boyer gave value to a lot of things I do, especially related to teaching. [The project] has really spurred me on to get involved in activities, more of an incentive to look at what I'm doing, to work at a higher level. [It] has [added] a lot to what you do – seeing it as scholarly. (J:1)

It remains to be seen whether, and for how long, nurse educators can resist the pressure for productivity that promotes a fragmented view of institutional research, a situation that may have significant implications for longer term funding and future inquiry (Rolfe, 2009; Thoun, 2009). The impact on the development of a community of scholars is clear.

> Before the project, [there was] a sense of isolation, isolated within the [institution]. [The project has] provided collegial support around my research. [It] provides contacts and communication with colleagues at other sites as well as opportunities to engage in collaboration [with] inter-site research. [It] feel[s] okay to talk about research, pick each other's brains, for instance review another's research ethics review application (M:1).

The opportunity to collaborate and enhance the scholarly experience of colleagues worked synergistically across the boundaries of the partner institutions and beyond.

> It is a very rich experience to be part of others who see scholarship as important in nursing because I feel strongly about it, and it is such an important part of our on-going responsibility. To have the opportunity to be part of this group was GOOD. There is always divided thought on the scholarship of teaching. To be with a group who put the importance on this is wonderful. [It] made me feel connected and inspired. I believe our profession needs to do so much work in this area of scholarship. (P:2)

Reflecting on the impact of the project on colleagues at this interviewee's site, one participant said,

> [It has h]ad a huge impact. The workshops and having [the facilitator] available to consult has provided an individual level of support, as well as bringing together faculty to learn about what we are interested in. Also [the project] has allowed faculty to work at the provincial level through the working groups that link scholars. All the above has provided a space for the less experienced researchers to work with the more experienced researchers. (Q:2)

These comments offer some tangible evidence on the influence of the innovation. The data highlight how perceptions changed with increased thoughts on working together, mentoring and creating networks of scholars with shared interests.

Discussion: The Context of Socio-Political Contradictions

Over the three years of the project, significant progress was made towards building scholarship capacity. It is clear that faculty were able to *observe* the *relative advantage* of participating in this innovation. The interviewees for the most part saw its *compatibility* and were able to come to grips with Boyer's (1990) ideas. While many of the partners have differing scholarship mandates, there was evidence of a growing consciousness about the self as scholar, the visibility of scholarship, and scholarship as

part of everyday practice and finally, the profound effects of working together in teams on areas of common interest that motivated and engaged colleages in the development of research. The capacity building is evident in the depth and breadth of scholarly activities being undertaken by faculty who, in the past, had not thought that their contributions and interests would shift into forms of inquiry, a situation that was literally beyond their wildest imagination. Participation in scholarly activities increased and scholar mentors emerged at many of the paticipating nursing program sites. Connections between partner sites around common interests are now apparent and joint projects continue to grow and flourish. From an administrative perspective, some institutions realized the importance of scholarship to their institutional communities in general, and addressed infrastructure needs and support for faculty. The diffusion of innovation was appropriated at institutional levels because adminstrators recognised the *relative advantage* of the activities being generated and what scholarly endeavours could be strategically supported given the institutional interests (Dearing, 2009).

Marginalization and Research Intensive Academic Communities

While the project was a success, there remains ongoing work to be undertaken. Continuing to support a broader view of scholarship and intentional scholarship capacity building, particularly the scholarship of teaching and learning is becoming increasingly difficult given exisiting cultural and structural contradictions such as traditional ideologies associated with research; the competitiveness associated with the valuing of individual research; lack of infrastructure supports; and time for research in contexts where there are decreasing numbers of nurse educators (CASN, 2010). These concerns are also well documented by Nossal (2006), albeit in another context, as universities promote research intensivity. We think it is important to pay attention to this feedback as the advances in nursing scholarship enhancement may be at risk.

The changing demographics of nurse educators in Canada and coinciding shortages of nurses has been deemed as a cyclical crisis in human resources (Fitzgerald, 2007). The restructuring and downsizing in health care during the 1980s and 1990s resulted in decreased educational opportunities for baccaulaureate qualified nurses (Lawless & Moss, 2007; Shannon & French, 2005), a situation that has had far reaching and long term consequences in the current world wide phenomena of a nursing shortage (International Council of Nurses [ICN], 2004; World Health Organization [WHO], 2002). One of the results of this complex situation is political pressure to increase nursing student numbers placing further pressures on human, fiscal and spacial resources in schools of nursing in post secondary education (Allen, 2008; Buerhaus, Donelan, Ulrich, Norman, & Dittus, 2006; CASN 2010). While the call to increase nursing student numbers at Canadian educational institutions has been recognised, it is only now becoming apparent that there is an even greater shortage of nurse educators who are older than their counterparts in clinical practice (Hinshaw, 2008), placing enormous strain on the declining numbers of nurse academics, the quality and diversity of educational programs for future generations of nurses, and nursing scholarship (CASN, 2010; Haigh & Johnson, 2007; Meleis, 2005). The impact of the nursing shortage, as well as the political pressure to increase the number of students and to do more with less funding is stretching experienced (expert) and novice nurse educators to their maximum work capacity to be able to meet the

growing demand. One of the immediate pragmatic solutions has been to hire nurse educators or clinical teachers on short term contracts, a practice that has existed for many years but with significant drawbacks. Unfortunately, given the fiscal restraints, in our experience, employment of these individuals is often without adequate preparation for teaching students, let alone preparation for scholarship endeavours; and often minimial orientation is provided to enable the new teacher to appreciate the multiple responsibilities required to support student learning (Smesny, et al., 2007). It is clear that such organizational endeavours can readily be understood as maintaining the financial health of the educational organization as a form of academic capitalism (Nossal, 2006). The results, argues Nossal can be seen in the commodification of the (research) work of the professoriate where large grants are rewarded boosting internal university revenue. However, at the same time, it also alienates those who teach, furthering the chasm between researchers and teachers.

In our experience we have found declining opportunities for clinicians to feel part of the academic world given their ongoing clinical supervisory role; and, because of their lack of presence in the educational environment, feelings of isolation exist as well as an absence of affiliation and connection with colleagues in the educational institution. Perhaps this is signalling an even deeper crisis in the larger educational debate, a growing anti-intellectualism rooted within some of the discourses on education in nursing (Aranda & Law, 2007; Walker, 2009).

There are other cultural, structural and politically contested territories being layed out such as questions about the adequacy of nursing programs (Diefenbeck, Plowfield, & Herrman, 2006); the influence of traditional gold-standard approaches to research (Rolfe, 2009) affecting the overall funding, the fiscal position (Nossal, 2006) and prestige of the universities; the types of scholarship that are successful in the competition for research funding; the various interests being played out in terms of the assumptions about the definition of scholarship and the types of scholarship needed and valued in nursing (Thoun, 2009). There are also disciplinary claims enacted through accrediting processes. These accrediting processes are not only grounded within the tertiary institutions, but more importantly perhaps through the professional registering bodies and CASN at a national level in Canada, all carrying weight in terms of the future and multiple directions nursing might desire to take in terms of scholarship. Our experience also suggests that there is a sense of disenchantment with what was once an ardent desire to engage in scholarship, including expanding on the scholarship of teaching and learning, within various academic institutions where nurses are being prepared. This may well be due to the competing claims, for example professional, institutional, personal competency or knowledge (Little & Milliken, 2007) that fuel the sense of fragmentation. It seems therefore, nursing is facing a significant crisis in education and in scholarly development particularly at a time when CASN (2010) is advocating the importance of ongoing scholarship in nursing programs to maintain accreditation, and to promote the spirit of inquiry in a culture of scholarship.

Given the aging population of nurse educators, the ability of nurse academics to choose locations where they desire to work, and the increasing numbers of nurse educators on short term contracts, there is clearly a compelling need to sustain efforts to support nursing scholarship and research capacity. Partnership in research raises issues in institutions where traditional paradigms of tenure and promotion, grant funding

acquisition, workload, and ethical reviews still support individual research. The broadened forms of research such as the scholarship of teaching and learning continue to be marginalized within the discipline (Rolfe, 2009) even though we believe it to be essential to the continuation of an educated and competent nursing workforce. Cross-site collaborations hold other challenges such as submitting multiple ethics proposals to each team-member site, accessing funding as a group rather than as an individual, dealing with questions around intellectual property, and promoting a view of scholarship that stands outside what counts as scholarship from the research intensive perspectives (Duke & Moss, 2009; Nossal, 2006). The depth of these and other tensions have their roots in the cultural and structural hegemonies within academic institutions which, to some extent, have been disrupted by particpating nurse educators who have attempted to navigate their institutional systems and embrace this innovation.

Critical Questions to Challenge the Current Institutional Hegemonies

While the innovation described in this paper was successful, we worry that sustaining the interest and increasing capacity for scholarship in nursing is going to be overpowered by the cultural and structural factors we are experiencing. While sustainability within our project teams is apparent, a vital part of the progress of the project is to continue the efforts to encourage faculty to use the supports available to them within and between institutions, and to share knowledge whenever possible. In addition, partnerships need to be broadened to engage colleagues in other fields and in non-traditional agencies or organizations involved in people's health and well-being. We think that it is critical to be asking questions about nursing scholarship particularly in education. We raise the following questions which might serve as a starting point in challenging the current institutional hegemonies:

1. How can colleagues collaborate to continue fostering scholarship capacity in colleges, universities and in clinical environments that promotes a broader vision of scholarship, especially the importance of the scholarship of teaching and learning?
2. Is it possible to create new ways to enhance scholarship by legitimizing differing views of scholarly participation in competing institutions?
3. What courses of action can be taken to resist the dominant view of scholarship and illuminate the significant contributions other processes (and outcomes) of inquiry can make to education and health care?
4. In what ways can meaningful partnerships between colleges, universities and clinical and practice environments be forged to sustain broader views of scholarship that enhance critical conversations in disciplinary and interdisciplinary understandings?

We suspect that the socio-political contexts we experience in nursing cross discipline boundaries and there are similar issues that challenge scholarship enhancement in other fields. We invite dialogue among colleagues across all disciplines along with the continuing support to foster scholarship capacity using a broadened view of scholarship.

We also wonder whether the adoption of the Diffusion of Innovation model might be an opportunity to address these questions and the socio-political contradictions.

References

Allen, L. (2008). The nursing shortage continues as faculty shortage grows. *Nursing Economic$, 26*(1), 35-40.

Allen, M. N., & Field, P. A. (2005). Scholarly teaching and scholarship of teaching: Noting the difference. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship, 2*(1), 12. Available at http://www.bepress.com/ijnes/vol2/iss1/art12 http://dx.doi.org/10.2202/1548-923X.1094

Aranda, K., & Law, K. (2007). Tales of sociology and the nursing curriculum: Revisiting the debates. *Nurse Education Today, 27*, 561-567. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2006.08.017

Boyer, E. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities for the professorate*. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation.

Budgen, C., & Gamroth, L. (2003). *Scholarship development for nursing faculty: Final report*. Collaborative Nursing Program Scholarship Committee, British Columbia, Canada, Collaborative Nursing Program.

Buerhaus, P. L., Donelan, K., Ulrich, B. T., Norman, L., & Dittus, R. (2006). State of the registered nurse workforce in the United States. *Nursing Economic$, 24*(1), 6-12.

Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. (2004). *Definition of scholarship: Position statement.* Ottawa, Ontario. Retrieved from http://www.casn.ca/en/46.html

Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. (2010). *The case for healthier Canadians: Nursing workforce education for the 21st century*. Retrieved from http://www.casn.ca/en/Whats_new_at_CASN_108/items/82.html

Cash, P. A., & Tate, B. (2008). Creating a community of scholars: Using a community development approach to foster scholarship with nursing faculty. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, *5* (1). Retrieved from http://www.bepress.com/ijnes/vol5/iss1/art6 http://dx.doi.org/10.2202/1548-923X.1454

Cheek, J. (2000). *Postmodern and poststructural approaches to nursing research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dearing, J. W. (2009). Applying diffusion of innovation theory to intervention development. *Research on Social Work Practice, 19*(5), 503-518. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1049731509335569

Diefenback, C. A., Plowfield, L. A., & Herrman, J. W. (2006). Clinical immersion: A residency model for nursing education. *Nursing Education Perspectives, (27)*2, 72-79.

Duke, J., & Moss, C. (2009). Re-visiting scholarly community engagement in contemporary research assessment environments of Australasian universities. *Contemporary Nurse, 32*(1-2), 30-41. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.32.1-2.30

Fitzgerald, D.C. (2007). Aging experienced nurses: Their value and needs. *Contemporary Nurse, (24)*2, 237-243. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.2007.24.2.237

Graneheim, U. H., & Lundman, B. (2004). Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: Concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nurse Education Today*, *24,* 105-112. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2003.10.001

Haigh, C., & Johnson, M. (2007). Attitudes and values of nurse educators: An international survey. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship, 4*(1). Retrieved from http://www.bepress.com/ijnes/vol4/iss1/art14 http://dx.doi.org/10.2202/1548-923X.1374

Hammersley, M. (1992). On feminist methodology. *Sociology, (26)*2, 187-206. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0038038592026002002

Hawranik, P., & Thorpe, K. M. (2008). Helping faculty enhance scholarship. *Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 39*(4), 155-163. http://dx.doi.org/10.3928/00220124-20080401-02

Hinshaw, A. S. (2008). Navigating the perfect storm: Balancing a culture of safety with workforce challenges. *Nursing Research*, *57*(1S), S4-S10. http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/01.NNR.0000280649.99062.06

International Council of Nurses. (2004). *The inadequate supply of nurses is having a negative affect on outcomes globally*. Press Release. Retrieved from http://www.icn.ch/PR13_04htm

Lather, P. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.

Lather, P. (2007). *Getting lost: Feminist efforts toward a doubl(d) science.* Albany: State University of New York.

Lawless, J., & Moss, C. (2007). Exploring the value of dignity in the work-life of nurses. *Contemporary Nurse*, *24*(2) 225-236. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.2007.24.2.225

Little, M. A., & Milliken, P. J. (2007). Practicing what we preach: Balancing teaching and clinical practice competencies. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, *4*(1). doi:0.22202/1548-923X.1305

Madsen, W., McAllister, M., Godden, J., Greenhill, J., & Reid, R. (2009). Nursing orphans: How the system of nursing education in Australia is undermining professional identity. *Contemporary Nurse, (32)*1-2, 9-18. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.32.1-2.9

McNamara, M. S. (2009). Nursing academics' language of legitimation: A discourse analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 46*, 1566-1579. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2009.05.013

Meleis. A. (2005). Shortage of nurses means shortage of nurse scientists. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 49*(2), 111.

Meleis, A. I. (2012). *Theoretical nursing: Development and progress*. (5th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams &Wilkins.

Nossal, K. R. (2006). A question of balance: The cult of research intensivity and the professing of political science in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Rene Canadienne de Science Politique, 39*(4), 735-754.

Richter, E. M., & Buttery, E. A. (2004). Economic rationalism: Serving tertiary business need? The Australian case. *Quality Assurance in Education, 12*(3), 120-127. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09684880410548744

Rogers, E. M. (2002). Diffusion of preventative innovations. *Addictive Behaviours, 27*, 989-993. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0306-4603(02)00300-3

Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations*. (3rd ed.). New York: Free Press.

Rogers, E. M. (2004). A prospective and retrospective look at the diffusion model. *Journal of Health Communication, 9*, 13-19. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10810730490271449

Rolfe, G. (2009). Writing-up and writing-as: Rediscovering nursing scholarship. *Nurse Education Today*, *29*, 816-820. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2009.05.015

Shannon, V., & French, S. (2005). The impact of the re-engineered world of health-care in Canada on nursing and patient outcomes. *Nursing Inquiry*, *12*(3), 231-239. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1440-1800.2005.00272.x

Smesny, A. L., Williams, J. S., Brazeau, G. A., Weber, R. J., Matthews, H. W., & Das, S. K. (2007). Barriers to scholarship in dentistry, medicine, nursing, and pharmacy practice faculty. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *71*(5), 1-9. http://dx.doi.org/10.5688/aj710591

Storch, J., & Gamroth, L. (2002). Scholarship revisited: A collaborative nursing education program's journey. *Journal of Nursing Education*, *41*(12), 524-530.

Tate, B., & Cash, P. A., (2008). *Year 3, final report: Developing scholarship / research capacity with nurse educators*. Retrieved from http://www.inspirenet.ca/document/nesn-year-three-report

Thoun, D. S. (2009). Toward an appreciation of nursing scholarship: Recognising our traditions, contributions, and presence. *Journal of Nursing Education, (48)*10, 552-556. http://dx.doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20090716-01

Walker, K. (2009). Curriculum in crisis, pedagogy in despair: A provocation. *Contemporary Nurse, 32*(1-2), 19-29. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.32.1-2.19

Walker, K., & Homes, C. A. (2008). The "order of things": Tracing a history of the present through a re-reading of the past in nursing education. *Contemporary Nurse, 30*(2), 106-118. http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.673.30.2.106

World Health Organization. (2002). *The world health report 2002: Reducing risks promoting healthy life*. Geneva: WHO Press.

Appendix

Excerpt from CASN (2004) Scholarship of Nursing and Scholarship of Teaching[1]

Scholarship in nursing encompasses a full range of intellectual and creative activities that may include the generation, validation, synthesis, and/or application of knowledge to advance the teaching, research and practice of nursing. It is associated with achievement of excellence, rigorous inquiry, reflective thought, expert knowledge, openness to criticism, peer review, and new ways of viewing phenomena of concern to nursing. It includes inquiry that builds a scientific body of nursing knowledge (scholarship of discovery), inquiry that supports the pedagogy of the discipline and the transfer of knowledge to learners (scholarship of teaching), generation and use of specialized nursing knowledge outside the work setting (scholarship of service), the advancement of clinical knowledge through expert practice (scholarship of application), and the development of new insights as a result of interdisciplinary work (scholarship of integration) (Boyer, 1990; Riley et al., 2002).

While the emphasis on one or more of the dimensions (discovery, teaching, service, application and integration) may vary from one university or college to another, depending on the institution's mission, the pursuit of excellence will not. To achieve the level of excellence required of scholarship, the work should be guided by the standards identified by Glassick, Taylor Huber, and Maeroff (1997). These six qualitative standards include: clear goals; adequate preparation; appropriate methods; significant results; effective presentation; and reflective critique[2]. The standards also provide a process for engaging in academic work that is systematic and promotes the rigor required of scholarly achievements.

Scholarship of Teaching

The scholarship of teaching is defined as the conveyance of the science and art of nursing from the expert to the novice, building bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning (Boyer, 1990). This dimension involves an approach in which teachers read widely and are intellectually engaged while individualizing learning, adapting to different learning styles, integrating evidenced based practice and understanding how knowledge is acquired and co-constructed. Teachers and students join together on a journey of discovery and develop relationships that model the healthy relationships expected between nurses and patients. This results in consistency of outcomes for student learning, a deeper understanding of the disciplines of nursing and education and the development of a scholarly way of being. For teaching to be scholarly, educational activities must be carefully planned and examined (Storch & Gamroth, 2002).

---

[1] From *Definition of scholarship: Position statement* by the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing, 2004. Ottawa, Ontario. Retrieved from http://www.casn.ca/en/46.html . Copyright 2012 by the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. Reprinted with permission.

[2] Reflective Critique: A critical appraisal of a piece of work which involves a high level of critical thinking and analysis.

Nursing is a practice discipline, therefore, how practice is learned, and how competency is maintained must be considered. Through the scholarship of teaching, nurse educators foster life-long learning and a spirit of inquiry. Appraisal of scholarly teaching includes self-assessment, peer assessment, and student assessment, so that these skills are fostered in the learner (Riley et al., 2002; Storch & Gamroth, 2002). In addition, learning experiences leading to scholarly writing and publication are created (Pullen, Reed & Oslar, 2001). Thus, future nurse scholars are developed, knowledge expanded and the profession of nursing is advanced. This dimension of scholarship asks the question "How are practitioners best prepared to be life-long effective learners?" (Riley, et al., 2002). (CASN, 2004).